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PACIFIC DILEMMA: BASING, ACCESS AND FORWARD DEPLOYMENT

by

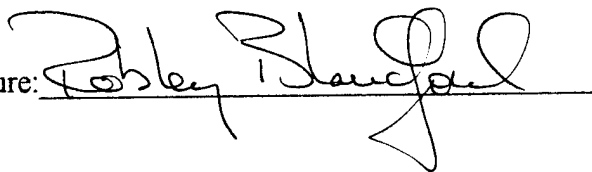
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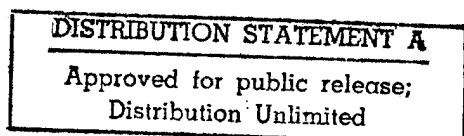
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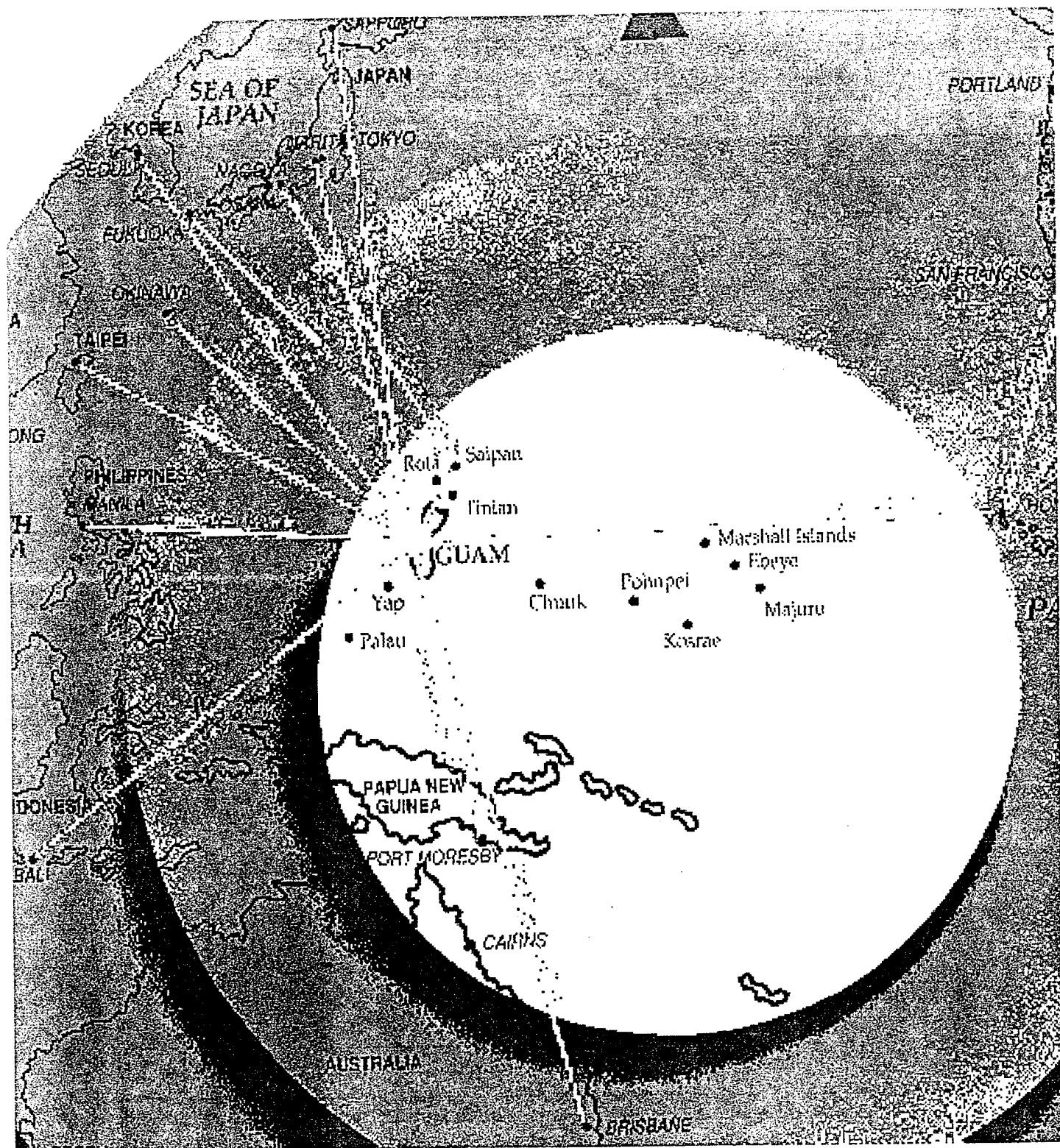
PACIFIC DILEMMA: FORWARD DEPLOYMENT AND BASING

United States security strategy hinges on available forward deployed and forward presence forces to project U.S. national interests. As the executive agent for national strategy accomplishment in the Pacific theater, USCINCPAC relies on the continued availability of overseas facilities and bases to carry out both the National Security and National Military Strategies. However, the "Tyranny of Distance" within this theater requires reliance on Cold War allies to meet the commitment.

As the international dimension of world politics shifts from a bipolar to a regional and economic emphasis, national priorities will have a greater play. Overseas basing carries with it considerable baggage--both for the nation granting basing rights, and the nation stationing troops overseas. Since the closing of the military facilities in the Philippines, CINCPAC has had to rely on Japan to provide the lion's share of bases within the Pacific theater. While this arrangement made sense during the Cold War and was equally beneficial to both nations, this condition may soon change. The possibility exists that the U.S. will be faced with a regional crisis that is contrary to Japan's national interest, and be restricted from responding militarily. U.S. planners need to prepare for this eventuality by aggressively seeking alternate basing sites, access facilities or develop forward logistics bases that can respond reliably in regional crisis.

This paper addresses the various regional limitations to alternate basing and access sites. While Japan supports U.S. operational and contingency plans, a growing military capability may

allow her to project her own national priorities. Similarly, other Asian nations find permanent basing contrary to their national interests. From an Asian perspective, developing a politically secure base facility is problematic. Within the Pacific area of responsibility, the only U.S. "real estate" in theater is Guam. Although small in comparison to the facilities in Japan, as an available forward logistics and training site, Guam is a convenient and viable solution.



If coercive diplomacy is the hallmark of U.S. foreign policy, then forward presence is the corner stone. Following World War II, overriding strategy focused on the bipolar US-USSR competition and the policy of containment. U.S. bases were positioned to form a ring around the Soviet empire to prevent its expansion. Facing an unsure future and opposed to the threat of communism, most allies were content with life under the U.S. umbrella. Nonetheless, the continued reliance on this structure, despite the collapse of the Soviet Union, has severely constrained U.S. strategy. Without change, it has the potential to cripple future regional theater courses of action. This paper will address the dilemma Pacific Commander's face when developing operational plans relying on forward bases. The over reliance on support from "containment" allies suggest that an alternate solution must be developed.

Pacific rim nations have shown dramatic economic, political and military growth since the seventies. Because of this growth--and especially the economic dimension-- the Asia-Pacific nations have retained a position of prime importance to U.S. planners. Just as the area as a whole has experienced explosive growth, individual nations, groups of states and regions have witnessed an economic miracle. Fully one third of U.S. exports are destined for Asian markets. Additionally, Asia is the recipient of 35 percent of U.S. international trade and the stimulus for millions of American jobs.<sup>1</sup> U.S. direct investment in Asia roughly doubled from 1982-1991. During the same period, however, Japanese investment more than trebled. If this decline in the relative U.S. trade and investment presence in East Asia persists, it will have a major affect on the U.S. role in the region.

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<sup>1</sup>Charles R. Larson, "Uncertainties, Turbulence, Head Concerns," Defense '92, July/August 1992, p. 31.

As the world order gradually changes from the Bipolar relationships of the post World War II era, we are now witnessing the birth of economic might as the primary measure of international prestige. The Pacific rim nations epitomize this model. Consequently, it is reasonable for U.S. policy makers to continue to focus on the rising specter of Asia as a competitor region. Similarly, these nations recognize their growing importance to the United States; however, the growing perception that U.S. military reductions will create an Asian power vacuum challenges U.S. regional influence.

The presence of both the Soviet Pacific fleet and the U.S. Seventh Fleet during the Cold War allowed for both political reform and economic development. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, an uneasy regional tension has existed. Many analysts suggest that for many of these emerging states, the continued presence of the U.S. is viewed as a "positive factor." In their view, "the U.S. presence provides a stable environment for continued rapid economic development. Fear of radical shifts in the regional power balance leads them to support a continuation of the American presence."<sup>2</sup> Despite the security relationships, as economic blocs take international precedence, increasingly the operative adjective is "economics."

Yet, along with the economic realities lies the suspicion that traditional rivalries have the potential to interfere with profit margin. As each nation grows wealthier, its fears grow. As an economically dynamic state, it can purchase security. As they purchase increasingly sophisticated "security," paranoia and arms race dynamics take hold in an ever tightening cycle.

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<sup>2</sup>Sergei Blagovolin, "Some Aspects of Russian Strategy in the Asia Pacific Region" in Asia in the 21st Century: Evaluating Strategic Priorities ed. Michael D. Bellows (Ft. McNair, Va: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1994), p.25.

For most of the Asia-Pacific countries, the security situation is bounded by the specter of a United States slowly withdrawing. Isolationist talk in U.S. domestic politics has struck a discordant note in the far corners of the Pacific. Visions of the departure from Subic Bay Naval Complex and Clark Air Force Base along with talks of a "peace dividend" and subsequent military downsizing is offset by increased arms purchases by these new economic giants. This, with uncertainty about U.S. regional commitment and fear of strategic vacuums should the U.S. withdraw has raised concern about "the future roles of the concurrently ascending powers--China and Japan."<sup>3</sup> To meet this challenge, exploring new mechanisms and institutions to meet the region's complex economic and security trials are in progress.

As RADM McDevitt, Director for Strategic Planning and Policy for the Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command (USCINCPAC), explained in a recent symposium: "at Pacific Command, it's our mission to focus military resources on securing our national interest in the region. . . . As we executed sensible post-Cold War adjustments to our Pacific presence, the nations of the region watched and speculated on our intentions. Though American commitments to regional alliances, to promoting prosperity and to maintaining military stability in the region had not diminished, the pledge that we intended to stay engaged over the long-term became a hard sell."<sup>4</sup>

If, as President Clinton is quoted, U.S. military presence is the acknowledged key to

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<sup>3</sup>Robert Manning, "The Challenge of Geoeconomics" in Asia in the 21st Century: Evaluating Strategic Priorities ed. Michael D. Bellows, (Ft McNair, Va: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1994), p. 125.

<sup>4</sup>Michael A. McDevitt, "The Strategy of the Pacific Command" in Asia in the 21st Century: Evaluating Strategic Priorities ed. Michael D. Bellows, (Ft. McNair, VA: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1994), p. 142.



regional security and "the bedrock of America's security role" in the area, then we must be willing to either expend more of our limited defense budget to the region or find a secure, low cost means to project our presence. "It is incumbent for the U.S. to exert its influence in the region both to promote peace and to protect our interests."<sup>5</sup> Preventing regional conflict remains the goal. Forward presence and forward deployed forces are the key for accomplishment.

To achieve this objective, USCINCPAC has developed a three tiered approach:

- ▶ In peacetime, our goal is regional stability through engagement and participation. We want to be engaged to prevent crisis from starting but also to foster regional ties and interoperability so we can act in concert with our allies and our friends if we must.
- ▶ In crisis, we want to be able to react promptly, decisively, and cooperatively. We hope to deter hostilities and to protect U.S. citizens and interests.
- ▶ In conflict, our end is swift victory multilaterally, if possible, but unilaterally if necessary. Our desired end state being a stable political balance that favors the United States and our allies and friends.<sup>6</sup>

While this policy intends to display U.S. resolve, to many Asians it confirms a situation many see as immensely dangerous. In a sense, this policy "reemphasizes the new U.S. overseas deployment principle--from a leading to a supporting role in regional defense."<sup>7</sup> In this context, it is important to define what forward deployed and forward presence are. As Captain Brian Robertson, Royal Australian Navy suggests, "presence is often seen as some form of gunboat

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<sup>5</sup>Thomas A. Delery, "U.S. Security Interests in the Pacific into the Twenty first Century: An Operational Plan," Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 1993, p.3

<sup>6</sup>Michael A. McDevitt, "The Strategy of the Pacific Command", p. 152.

<sup>7</sup>Cha Young-Koo, "National Security Strategy of South Korea: Looking Toward the 21st Century" in Asia in the 21st Century: Evaluating Strategic Priorities, ed. Michael D. Bellows (Ft. McNair, VA: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1994), p.78.

diplomacy, namely an armed force able to coerce, intimidate and if necessary, strike in support of national interests.<sup>8</sup> The U.S. Army's Mobilization, Deployment, Redeployment manual (FM 100-17) defines forward presence and indicates that "multiple forms of forward deployments . . . are required to maintain a positive influence in distant regions of the world."<sup>9</sup>

#### Japan: A committed Ally?

Currently, U.S. forward presence includes one forward deployed Carrier Battle Group (CVBG) along with a Marine Expeditionary Force stationed in Japan. Additionally, two to three USAF fighter wing equivalents are stationed in both Japan and Korea. Plans to reduce the U.S. Army forces in Korea were halted because of the latent nuclear threat from North Korea.

By locating assets forward, U.S. forces are better situated to react to crisis or presence in support of national interests. Additionally, the geographic advantage includes overcoming the "tyranny of distance" endemic in the vast expanse of the Pacific ocean. "The ability to homeport ships forward in the Pacific acts as a force multiplier, greatly increasing the presence coverage or responsiveness for any force level over what can be attained from California."<sup>10</sup>

While the potential power inherent in U.S. forward forces is tremendous, their position and composition are decidedly a function of Cold War imperatives. The loss of the Philippine

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<sup>8</sup>Brian D. Roberson, "Military Proposals for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific Region" Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI: 1995, p. 11.

<sup>9</sup>U.S. Department of Defense, Mobilization, Deployment, Redeployment, FM-100-17 (Washington, DC)

<sup>10</sup>Desmond P. Wilson Pacific Fleet Basing Study: Final Report. CRM 93-67 (Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analysis, May 1993), p. 5.

bases in 1992 had the net effect of "placing all our eggs in one basket." Instead of projecting military influence from numerous Pacific locations, we now station most deployed military infrastructure in Japan. Our departure from the Philippine bases "effectively halved the foreign shore support available to the Pacific Fleet and increased even further the importance of Japan as the remaining foreign host with homeport equivalent bases and significant shore support."<sup>11</sup>

During the Cold War, when both communist China and the Soviet Union were the focus of U.S. policy, it was in Japan's interest to maintain a large U.S. presence on her soil. While the Soviet Union posed a global threat, the "bargain made sense; Japan could busy itself building democracy and a wealthy economy behind America's broad military shield, while America could base its planes and warships deterringly close to the potential hot spots in Asia's version of the cold war."<sup>12</sup>

Due to provisions of Japan's Constitution that preclude her from developing an offensive military capability, U.S. military forces serve a dual role of defending the island nation and offering protection to those whose security rests in a Japan unable to rearm. Not only do the Japanese bases support the U.S. regional military presence, but they also support the fleet and Air Force in readiness in varying degrees. By providing facilities for training, repairs, maintenance and logistics Japan has easily replaced most of those assets lost in the Philippines. Since Japan also pays up to 70 percent of the deployment cost of all U.S. military located in that country, it adds an additional sweetener to the staggering cost associated with stationing military

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<sup>11</sup>Desmond P. Wilson, Pacific Fleet Basing Study: Final Report, CRM 93-67, (Alexandria, VA: Center For Naval Analysis, 1993), p.11.

<sup>12</sup>"Asia's Flagging Alliance" The Economist, 13-19 April 1996, p.13.

facilities and assets overseas.<sup>13</sup>

However, having a varied and impressive collection of military assets located within one foreign nation can, and probably will eventually, lead to both political problems and challenges for the Operational Commander. A forward base is only as valuable as its continued reliability during times of crisis. Daniel Chiu, an Asia Analyst at the Center for Naval Analysis, argues that "although countries may agree to provide bases or access facilities, they may still deny use of these sites for political reasons under certain circumstances."<sup>14</sup> Since the bases in Japan are the largest and most important not only in the region but, for the U.S., constitute the linchpin of our entire Pacific strategy, continued access is a necessity. Any decrease in their utility significantly affects our capabilities throughout Asia. Restrictions as simple as limiting flight operations to "daylight only" or denying access to certain training sites strains military capabilities. "In fact, the explosive arcs of some naval magazines already extend into civilian areas surrounding the installations"<sup>15</sup> a condition expressly prohibited for in CONUS sites. In Okinawa, restrictions on U.S. Marine Corps operations concerning the type and timing of essential training and exercises, including amphibious landing exercises, have caused the Marines to seek alternate training locations.

The Clinton Administration assumed the Presidency on a platform of "it's the economy,

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<sup>13</sup>William J. Perry, "Ever Vigilant in the Asia-Pacific Region," Defense Issues, vol. 10, no. 87, 12 September 1995, p.4.

<sup>14</sup>Daniel Y Chiu, The Politics of Overseas Bases and Access Facilities: Prospects for the Future, CRM 93-05 ( Alexandria, VA: Center for Naval Analysis, 1993), p. 20.

<sup>15</sup>Patrick Cronin and Ezra F. Vogel, "Unifying U.S. Policy on Japan" Strategic Forum, no 51, November 1995, p.19.

Stupid." He promised four years of attention to domestic priorities at the expense of foreign entanglements. With this came an acrimonious debate between the deficit ridden United States and cash flush Japan. The resentment from those trade discussions has raised three broad questions concerning the future of bilateral relations between the United States and Japan in both economic and security circles:

1. Will American and Japanese continue to support a defense relationship despite strained trade disputes? ;
2. Will Japan maintain confidence in the relationship even as leading editorial writers and academics disparage public support for it or advocate it as a bargaining chip to strengthen leverage in trade negotiations? ;
3. Will Americans support the alliance despite Japanese reluctance to open their markets further or to risk deploying their military forces to danger zones?<sup>16</sup>

While it is too early to decide the answers to these questions, there are some distressing indicators that a policy shift may be in the not too distant Japanese future. Restricted by Japanese law concerning the makeup, composition and use of indigenous military forces, recent pressure by the United States for Japan to accept a greater share of the regional military obligation may have a deleterious side effect. While the talks may have made some improvement in trade imbalance dynamics, it has also had the effect of bringing to the forefront domestic Japanese discontent with the current security arrangement. Protestors calling for the Americans to withdraw following the recent Okinawa rape trial of American servicemen mustered Japan's biggest demonstration in a quarter century. The rape, some said, proved that Americans behaved as though they were still members of an occupation force. The only way to cure

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p.1.

Americans of their arrogance was to send them packing.<sup>17</sup>

Nonetheless, Japan is faced with an ageing population who has displayed little interest in "going it alone." In a poll taken following the rape case, only 14% of Japanese polled wanted all U.S. troops to leave; However, only a paltry 7% wanted the current basing structure to remain.<sup>18</sup> The reverberations of the incident were obvious, suggesting a recognition across the political spectrum of the need to revisit the value and relevance of a highly encumbering alliance designed for a different era.<sup>19</sup>

Some analysts have noted that the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force has maintained a persistent building program despite the government cycling that has occurred during the past four years. This force, composed of highly specialized and technologically up-to-date assets, is designed to project maritime force and protect Japanese interests out to one thousand nautical miles from Japan.<sup>20</sup> Henry Kissinger notes in his recent addition to National Security reading, Diplomacy, that "in the immediate future, Japan, faced with an aging population and a stagnating economy, might decide to press its technological and strategic superiority before China emerges as a superpower and Russia recovers its strength."<sup>21</sup> Is a persistent arms buildup the first signs of another Port Arthur and Pearl Harbor? An effective U.S. security presence

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<sup>17</sup>"America and Japan: Friends in Need," The Economist, 13-19 April 1996. p. 17-19.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>19</sup>Jonathan Pollack, "The United States and Asia in 1995," Asian Survey, vol. 36, no. 1, January 1996, p. 9.

<sup>20</sup>A.W. Grazebrook, "More regional Naval Growth" Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter: Annual reference Edition, vol. 21, no. 6/7, December 1994/January 1995, p. 14.

<sup>21</sup>Henry Kissinger, Diplomacy (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), p.828.

remains the key to maintaining the peace in Asia. A credible commitment to the security of Japan helps to deter conflict on the Korean peninsula. A perceived diminution of the U.S. military commitment to either Japan or Korea, including the nuclear umbrella, would encourage a more independent Japanese military. Many states in the Pacific fear just such a recurrence and are preparing for its eventuality.

Nonetheless, the time may come--and may come sooner than U.S. planners are prepared -when the security and sanctity of U.S. bases are no longer in Japan's national interest. When that time comes, if the United States intends to retain a "place at the table" in Asia, alternate solutions must already be in place. Astute Asian planners see this as a long term possibility and are making plans now for its certainty.

#### ASEAN and Southeast Asia

While Japan is our largest basing partner, it is not alone. Although small in comparison, the U.S. military has contracted facilities spread across the Pacific with differing degrees of importance. Access facilities in Southeast Asia play an important role in supporting U.S. deployments and operations in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean. U.S. Navy port visits have aided in the impression that American forces are viable and available to counter aggression in support of U.S. national security interests. In many countries it is easier to support occasional naval visits and participate in maritime exercises because of the very nature of naval operations--out of sight. In countries with large Muslim populations it may be difficult for their governments to support--or be seen supporting--actions against other Muslim countries. "The reliability of these sites may be particularly uncertain for crisis response activities when they

may be most needed."<sup>22</sup> As RADM Strasser noted in an article for the Naval Institute Press in 1993, "a final criterion puts a premium on forces that are not dependent on access to foreign bases. It might be difficult to obtain such access in the future. . . . Naval forces are even more effective if they have low profile access to logistics airheads to ensure quick resupply of critical spare parts."<sup>23</sup> It is understandably less difficult for a country to accept an occasional naval port visits than an Army battalion or Air Force wing deployed for an extensive period.

Global '94, a U.S. Navy sponsored war game outlines' regional objectives for U.S. policy makers in the Asian Pacific arena. Specifically, they foresaw the need for maintaining varied courses of action to meet regional crisis. Of the eleven objectives, only seven fit in a traditional military sense; the remainder consider military operations other than war (MOOTW).

Of note, however, is the listed primary objective-- Maintain the U.S. position as a major economic, political and military power in East Asia and the Pacific.<sup>24</sup>

Whether these goals are achievable in the Asian Pacific theater is questionable. For many in these states, the emphasis that the United States has historically placed on human rights and personal freedoms are contrary to their culture and social structures. They view our imposition of "western values" as the first step to political instability and as an interference with their drive to economic and political independence. This combined with an almost universal increase in size and capabilities of national armed forces is cause for alarm. In many ASEAN

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<sup>22</sup>Daniel Chiu, The Politics of Overseas Bases and Access Facilities, p. 21.

<sup>23</sup>Robert L Pfaltzgraff, Jr. and Richard H. Schultz, Jr., ed., Naval Forward Presence and the National Military Strategy (Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, 1993), p. 260.

<sup>24</sup>Center for Naval Analysis, Global '94: Vol IV Asia Pacific Regional Estimate (Newport, RI: 1994), p. 42.



states fourth generation fighters are either in the inventory or on the way. Thailand has purchased a VSTOL carrier and China has developed a whole range of power projection capabilities. Most states have purchased advanced technology weaponry from the collapsed Soviet Union and Warsaw pact states, including submarines. For U.S. military planners, these advances are certainly troubling. The U.S. forward deployed military has been the catalyst for Asian economic growth by "underpinning the region's stability and economic dynamism."<sup>25</sup> As the economic ties between the United States and these states increases, maintaining a stable environment to will play an even greater role.

Without available, accessible and reliable bases, a prolonged intervention in the far reaches of the Pacific is questionable. Even facilities that have a reasonably good confidence of access may not be credible during periods of regional or international crisis. Since access agreements are generally a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), breaking or disregarding is less troublesome politically. Since MOUs are not treaties, and thus not ratified as binding, they are "generally easier to terminate."<sup>26</sup> Indeed, one of our foremost allies in the Pacific, Thailand, refused landing and takeoff rights to U.S. military aircraft in April and May 1992 in response to U.S. sanctions denouncing government treatment of protestors following controversial elections.

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<sup>25</sup>Robert Manning, "The Challenge of Geoeconomics" in Asia in the 21st Century: Evaluating Strategic Priorities. Michael D. Bellow, (Ft. McNair, Washington, DC: Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1994), p. 129.

<sup>26</sup>Daniel Y. Chiu. The Politics of Overseas Bases and Access Facilities: Prospects for the Future. CRM 93-05, (Alexandria, VA.: Center for Naval Analysis, 1993), p. 21.

### Access or Bases? Guam: Where America's Day Begins.

Since U.S. National Strategy provides for the forward deployment of our forces, these factors must be considered. In the Pacific theater, options open to the military commander are few. As we have addressed, Japan is a staunch ally, supportive of U.S. strategy in the region--as long as it meets her own national priorities. Similarly, other Asian nations may allow access to U.S. forces on an "as needed" basis, but are unwilling to offer long-term bases or treaty facilities. The probability of recreating a facility similar to those held in the Philippines is unrealistic. The only sure option is to rely on a force posture stationed on U.S. territory. From a Pacific perspective, this means either California, Hawaii or Guam.

How then should CINC planners prepare for operations based on unsure facilities? The primary benefit of forward deploying forces is that they can respond rapidly to regional crisis in support of national interests. Additionally, forces based forward permanently have already established logistics and sustainment lines of communication. While no U.S. territory beyond Hawaii is sufficiently large to house operational forces in depth, there are options for logistics and sustainment support sites that would offer increased capabilities. With fewer U.S. forces stationed overseas, we must "increase our capability to project forces abroad. The existence of a credible power projection capability complements our overseas presence in acting as a deterrent to potential adversaries."<sup>27</sup>

The DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms defines a Naval Advanced Logistic support site (ALSS) as "an overseas location used as the primary transshipment point in

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<sup>27</sup>"Crisis Response and Influence: The Value of Overseas Military Presence," Unpublished Research Paper, Newport, RI:Chief of Naval Operations Strategic Studies Group, 1994), p. ii.

the theater of operations for logistic support." It continues that "such a site possesses full capabilities for storage, consolidation, and transfer of supplies and for support of forward-deployed units . . . with port and airfield facilities in close proximity . . . and must possess the throughput capacity required to accommodate incoming and outgoing intertheater airlift and sealift."<sup>28</sup> Within the Pacific area of responsibility only one such site exists on U.S. soil--Guam.

Strategically located in the northern Pacific approximately 6000 kilometers from Honolulu and about three-quarters of the way between Hawaii and the Philippines, Guam is the only U.S. "real estate" in Asia. Only slightly more than three times the size of Washington, D.C., it is, significantly, ten steaming days and seven flight hours west of Hawaii. Boasting a population of 138,000 inhabitants (roughly one-third U.S. military and their dependents), the island has one of the few natural deep draft ports in the mid Pacific. An area of deep concern for the inhabitants of the island, the U.S. military controls approximately one third of the useful land. Significant POL, weapons' storage and maintenance facilities, coupled with a Fleet Industrial Supply Center (FISC) and Ship Repair Facility (SRF) makes Guam a potent forward logistics and repair Base. The stationing of fleet logistics assets in five Military Sealift Command (MSC) ships and a Helicopter Combat Support Squadron round out the naval component. Additionally, the facilities at Andersen AFB consisting of twin runways capable of handling heavy bomber and transport aircraft, weapons storage and repair facility and substantial POL sites allow elements of the 13th Air Force rapid access to all points west. In short, Guam meets all the criteria for a naval advanced logistic support site in that it possesses "full

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<sup>28</sup>U.S. Department of Defense, DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms JP 1-02 (Washington), p. 93.

capabilities for storage, consolidation, and transfer of supplies and for support of forward-deployed units during major contingency and wartime periods." The definition continues that a naval ALSS should be "located within the theater of operations but not near the main battle areas."<sup>29</sup>

Despite the strategic value, however, both 1993 and 1995 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) acts reduced the capabilities of Guam as a forward logistics base. Closing the Naval Air Station in 1993 and consolidating the Naval Station, closing the FISC and SRF in 1995 significantly reduced its utility.<sup>30</sup> As Governor Carl Gueterrez noted at hearing before the BRAC commission, "closing Guam means the end of a forward deployed logistic and support replenishment center for the Seventh Fleet."<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, it retains significant capabilities as a politically secure facility. Avenues exist to cooperatively "share" closing facilities with civilian contractors (i.e. joint military/civil ship repair site; joint military/civil supply structure) to ensure available and consistent access.<sup>32</sup>

To date, the most compelling argument against promoting Guam is the high upkeep and maintenance costs, particularly following the heavy typhoon and earthquake damage of 1992/3. However, when compared to the island's inherent capabilities and near by training ranges, the

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<sup>29</sup>U.S. Department of Defense, Doctrine for Joint Rear Area Operations, JP 3-10 (Washington), p. 130.

<sup>30</sup>"America and Japan: Friends in Need" The Economist, 13-19 April 1996, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> "First Regional hearing of the 1995 Base Closure and realignment Commission for the Closure and Realignment of Military Installations in the United States and its Territories." (Agana, Guam: Guam Legislature, 29 March 1995), p. 13.

<sup>32</sup>Telephone conversation with CDR. Southard, USN, USCINCPAC-J5, Honolulu, HI, 29 April 1996.

costs are small. Beginning in 1992, the U.S. Marine Corps began using the military reserve on Tinian island for the annual joint "Tandem Thrust" exercise. Located eighty miles north of Guam and forty-five miles south of an extensive island bomb/gunnery range, it has replaced training exercises previously conducted in the Philippines and Okinawa. Equally important for the Carrier Air Wing and visiting Air Force fighter squadrons, except for published air routes, the airspace in the vicinity of Guam is unrestricted allowing both tactical and Air Combat Maneuvering (ACM) training.

As a Chief of Naval Operations Strategic Studies Group concluded, "we need forces forward which convey U.S. interest and resolve with a minimum of reliance on other countries. For the foreseeable future, the advantage of proximity, mobility, sustainability, "scale-ability," and freedom of action inherent in Naval forces will make them especially valuable presence assets."<sup>33</sup> While Guam does not have the inherent capability to house large scale military units, as a forward logistics base it is without comparison.

#### California or Bust?

United States strategic policy has relied on the availability of forward bases to achieve foreign policy aims. During the Cold War such an expectation was reasonable, in the post Soviet era, this continued reliance is not. Instead of our regional allies making a bipolar decision, they are now faced with much more diverse problems. Indeed, for many, the "uneasy peace" of the Cold War allowed for explosive economic growth. Without U.S. military presence, however, the eventuality exists that the concomitant arms race in this region will lead to conflict. While forces that deploy from the west coast are permanently available regularly,

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<sup>33</sup>"Crisis Response and Influence," p. ii.

the time required for response to regional crisis is limited. Additionally, should the facilities on Japan not be available, having a preestablished naval logistics site on Guam would allow for rapid deployment and sustainment of a reaction force. Perhaps equally important, to those Asian observers who closely watch U.S. military commitment in the region, an increased capability on this centrally located island would send an important signal that the United States intends to remain an active and determined player.

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